

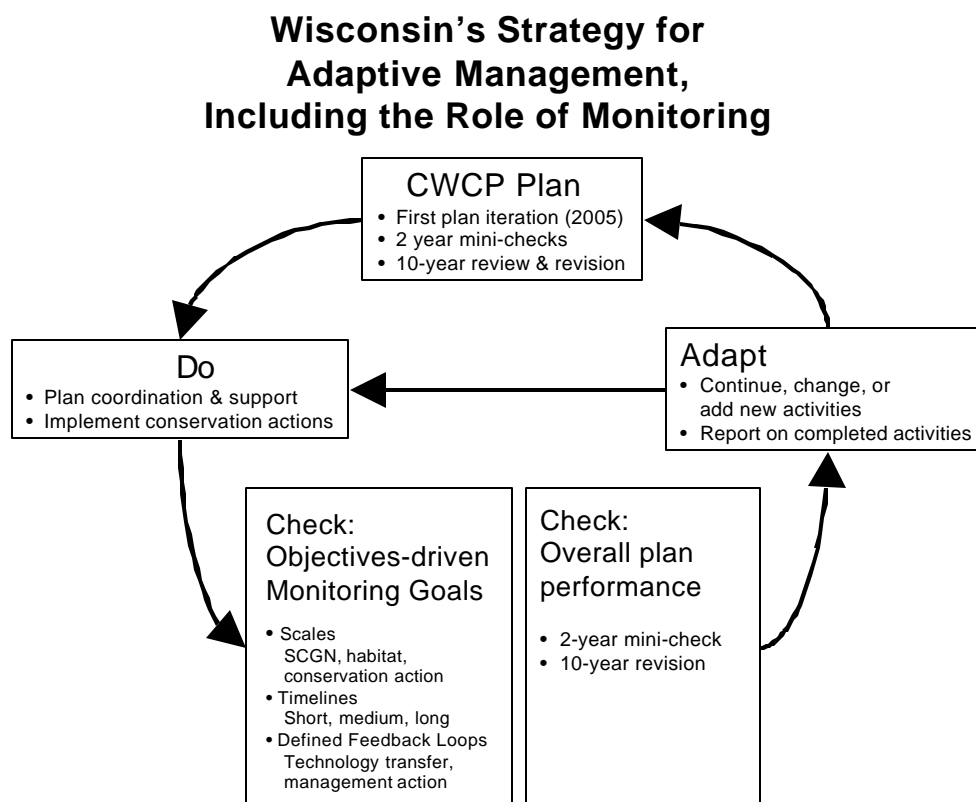
Chapter 7. Review and Revision

7.1 Introduction

This section of Wisconsin's *Strategy for Wildlife Species of Greatest Conservation Need* sets out the steps of the review and revision process, defining its scope, breadth, and timing. Review and revision will include assessment of the overall administration and coordination of the *Strategy*, and perhaps even more importantly, it will evaluate and report the success of the conservation actions implemented to protect the Species of Greatest Conservation Need and their habitats.

Strategy review and revision will follow the principles of Adaptive Management, an approach to continuous improvement that incorporates the results of monitoring and evaluation into management actions in order to adapt and learn over time (Figure 7-1). In order to keep the *Strategy* light on its feet and responsive to changing information and conditions, we are planning several interim steps in review throughout the life of the *Strategy*, at approximately 2-year intervals, leading into a full review and revision of the *Strategy* within the ten year period required by the U.S Fish & Wildlife Service.

Figure 7-1. Wisconsin's strategy for adaptive management including the role of monitoring.



7.2 Organization

Lead responsibility for the review and revision of the *Strategy* and its components will lie with the Department of Natural Resources' Endangered Resources program. Endangered Resources staff will coordinate the full 10-year review and revision, to include experts from throughout the Department of Natural Resources and its conservation partners, such as the Advisory Team members who participated in the development of the *Strategy* itself. Other key DNR programs will include Integrated Science

Services, Wildlife Management, Fisheries, and Forestry. Input by staff and partners in each of the five DNR Regions will likely be coordinated through the Regional Ecologists. Species teams, similar to those formed during the initial development of the *Strategy*, will be reconvened and augmented with additional scientists as appropriate. Endangered Resources' staff will also lead an effective, efficient, and inclusive short-term review process approximately every two years to check in with key Department staff and conservation partners and identify key updates needed in the *Strategy* to address important changes in species' status, environmental circumstances and other newly available, critical information, without diverting significant attention or resources from the implementation of on-the-ground conservation actions.

7.3 Scope and Recommendations for *Strategy* Review and Revision

Ten-Year Full Review and Revision

- Use the original eight required *Strategy* elements and/or any new guidance and criteria issued at the Federal level.
- Review basic approach and methodology:
 - The processes used to develop the first iteration of the list of Species of Greatest Conservation Need and their habitat associations will be reviewed and modified as needed.
- Report on the *Strategy*'s influence on the status of Wisconsin's Species of Conservation Need:
 - Are there species that can now be removed from Wisconsin's list of Species of Greatest Conservation Need? What role did the *Strategy* play in this status change?
 - Are there species that should be added to Wisconsin's list of Species of Greatest Conservation Need?
 - Are there species that were initially identified as 'needing more information' that are now ready to be added to or removed from the list of Species of Greatest Conservation Need?
 - How has the quality and quantity of habitat for the Species of Greatest Conservation Need changed?
 - How has the assessment of issues, threats and conservation actions for the species, Ecological Landscapes, or natural communities changed over the past 10 years?
 - Are conservation actions being implemented and are they having a positive effect on Species of Greatest Conservation Need and their habitats? Are State Wildlife Grant dollars being applied in areas where they have the most impact? (Approaches to evaluate these are clearly laid out in the Monitoring Chapter (Chapter 5) and are not repeated here).
 - Are there important conservation actions that were not or could not be implemented? What can be done to remedy this situation?
- Report on the database and information management:
 - Is there an accessible and dynamic database system for the Species of Greatest Conservation Need and their habitats?
 - What progress has been made to inform and involve the public in becoming aware of and taking action to protect or restore the Species of Greatest Conservation Need and their habitats?
- Report on coordination and communication among conservation partners?
 - Have outreach and coordination efforts been effective and included all partners?
 - What feedback do conservation partners have to offer based on their perspective and experience in implementation?
 - Do we have evidence that Wisconsin's Strategy is embraced as a statewide base for information and planning?

- Include the performance measures and analysis through Monitoring (see Chapter 5) as an integral part of *Strategy* revision.
- Identify the issues and topics that were beyond reach during the development of the first *Strategy* and select those that are of priority to cover during revision. For example:
 - Consider approaches for partners to collectively recommend priority threats and conservation actions at a regional level.
 - Consider approaches to more fully explore threats and conservation action in social and economic contexts.
 - Take steps to better integrate the invertebrate species into the summary and analysis of vertebrate Species of Greatest Conservation Need and their habitats.

The ten-year review and revision will also encompass and build upon each of the checks listed below for the more rapid, efficient short-term reviews.

Short Term Checks (at approximately 2-year intervals)

- Scan for new Issues & Threats: Are there any major new threats to species or their habitats that must be addressed through immediate conservation actions?
 - For example, large-scale energy development, outbreaks of disease such as the West Nile virus, a documented population crash or damage to major portion of a species' habitat, or predictions of the impacts of global warming.
- Check the list of Species of Greatest Conservation Need: Revisions to the list of Species of Greatest Conservation Need will be considered if substantial new information indicates that revisions are warranted. Global and state ranks will be updated based on changes to Natural Heritage Inventory rankings. Species experts will check to see if there are significant enough adjustments to the ranking criteria, given any new information now available and with special attention to those species previously identified as having information needs, to warrant a full review of the list. Assuming that there are substantive changes to the species rankings, scores will be recalculated and the list of Species of Greatest Conservation Need revised.
- Check the effectiveness of database management:
 - Are data gathered through State Wildlife Grants being captured in the Natural Heritage Inventory and other relevant databases?
 - Is new and significant information about the Species of Greatest Conservation Need and their habitats being added to the database as appropriate to help identify critical conservation issues and needs?
- Check the outcomes of the State Wildlife Grants:
 - Is implementation helping conservation partners move from strategy to on-the-ground operation?
 - Are projects being completed on time and with expected results?
 - Are grantees submitting results in the format needed to keep consistent records and contribute to the science-based management and effective monitoring of the Species of Greatest Conservation Need and their habitats?
- Check the overall effectiveness of the *Strategy* administration, coordination, and communication:
 - Are coordination and communication going smoothly, and have partners been effectively involved?

- . Is the infrastructure to support database and website management, monitoring, and overall administration, coordination, communication, and outreach sufficient?
- . Are the Regional Ecologists adequately supported, with consistent guidance and resources, to lead *Strategy* implementation in the regions?
- . Are the most recent updates to the *Strategy* routinely available through newsletters, status reports, and the web?
- . Is current information on the Species of Greatest Conservation Need, their habitats, and priority conservation actions currently being implemented for both readily available to all Wisconsin partners and citizens?